hanniholidays 2016 ficlets

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hanniholidays 2016 ficlets

by doctormissy

Summary

A collection of ficlets I write for the Tumblr event HanniHolidays during December. Mostly (Christmas) fluff. The calendar is here.

27. Hot chocolate recipes aren't wise to argue about.
28. Will wanted a proof Hannibal used to do skating as a young lad - here it goes!
29. Forgetting to take gloves on a long dog walk in the middle of the toughest winter was a terribly bad idea.
30. Will and Hannibal say their New Year's resolutions.
31. Will and Hannibal spend New Year's Eve in Paris, watching the fireworks at the Seine-but not watching at all. Because there is a surprise far better.

Holiday Biscuits

Hannibal put the rolling pin aside and crouched down so he could see whether the pastry was as thin and level as supposed to be. He ran his hand over it lightly to feel all of the potential imperfections the piece of pastry of course lacked. It was perfectly ready for Will to cut little gingerbread men out of it.

Will, who was leaning against the counter, rolled his eyes at the cook. “Hannibal, it’s just Christmas cookies. It’s fine.”

“No, it’s not, Will. Christmas cookies, as you say, are no less important than any other dish a chef prepares, and they should be treated with care equal to all of their creations.”

Will snorted. “‘All of their creations’? Are you saying that—” He turned to Hannibal, a wide grin gradually spreading across his face.

But Hannibal quickly wiped it off by putting his floured hand on his cheek in order to shut him up before he could finish the teasing thought. The white powder was all over Will’s face – and that gave him a wicked idea.

“I am not saying anything, Will. I am merely correcting your assumptions.” Hannibal presented him with a long, intense gaze and a micro smile. He took the rolling pin again and smoothed the spicy gingerbread pastry until he finally decided it was impeccable.

Will took the biscuit cutter. “Will you allow me to have the honour…?”

“It’s all yours, dear. But make the gaps between the men as small as you can, otherwise the pastry would be too floury, and that would be a w—”

Will ceased to listen to what he said. As he was stepping away to make way for him, Will gathered as much flour from the counter as he could. He grabbed Hannibal by his buttocks and pulled him in for a kiss – which was only a pretext for flouring his expensive clothes and all of his face.

Equal, weren’t they? Then they should be equally soiled, too, not just Will. That would be unfair.

Will rapidly broke the kiss, but his hands stayed where he put them. “Satisfying enough. Merry Christmas, love.”

Hannibal gave him a faint smile, even though he was a little irritated by all the flour covering him. But he would forgive his Will anything.

“Merry Christmas, *mylimasis.*”

Ornament

It was late evening in Parisian Trocadero Christmas Markets. Snowflakes slowly fell down from the sky and covered the roads and pavements with their cold whiteness.

Will Graham walked along the Champs-Elysées, relishing the mixture of various smells wafting from all of the stands selling homemade and gourmet food and warm beverages. His cold hands were in his pockets and a bag or two swung on his left forearm.

He was out shopping for Christmas presents for Hannibal, who had some important business to deal with on the other side of the metropolis.

The place was insanely crowded, yet he felt alone without him, among all the strangers who spoke in a language he couldn't understand fully, let alone speak it. Moreover, most of the French weren't exactly friendly to English-speakers, American same as European.

Still, that still couldn't be compared to the beauty of the illuminated monuments and trees shining in the darkness of the evening, stands full of decorations, foods, gifts, and other Christmas-like things typical for Europe, and the very atmosphere of the place.

Everything reminded him of Hannibal Lecter and the life they had now.

Everything made him remember that he wasn't there with him.

And what reminded him of Hannibal the most was a stand with ornaments he has just come to. They had many things, glass baubles, decorations; but the most marvellous, outstanding tree ornament hung in the midst of the upper row of balls, reflecting the lights and shining.

It was a middle-sized silver bauble with a sparkly black stag standing proudly in a circle of fir twigs bound with a checked red-and-green ribbon at the top. Well—it was probably a reindeer, but the shape, the glory, the sparkling darkness reminded him of Ravenstag, the majestic feathered hart his delusional mind used to see. Hannibal's Ravenstag.

Will came closer. He thought Hannibal would love the irony of it and chuckled at the thought. That ornament would definitely be the highlight of their Christmas tree.

"How much do you want for that?" he asked the street trader in accented French, pointing at it.

Fireplace

Will sat on the ground in front of the crackling, radiant fireplace with a mug of steaming mulled wine in his hands. He bent his legs and let the fire warm them.

Encephalitis ran to her master at once, sniffing at the wine and plopping down by his side. Will smiled at her. His gaze lingered.

Hannibal walked to his partner with a faint smile on his face and a glass of the mulled wine spiced with Ceylon cinnamon, star anise, cloves, black peppercorns, oranges, and honey. He sat down next to him, bodies touching.

Will turned to the fire again, and stared at the flickering orange flames. It was somewhat calming, the peaceful and warm atmosphere filling the otherwise dark and empty house. He wished for it to last forever. But their life wasn't as simple.

Hannibal pulled away from him, and watched his face lighted by the fire. It flattered him magnificently. He couldn't look away.

"You look beautiful in the light, Will."

Will chuckled. He did not know what to say – and so he leant into Hannibal and pressed a kiss on his mouth. That was the best expression of his thoughts and feelings.

Snowball

Chapter Notes

All of the previous ones were post-TWotL - but this one is in season one!

upon request (kind of) in reblogs on Tumblr, I added a piece to this

Will was so absorbed in the conversation with Dr Lecter that he failed to notice Beverly, Price, and Zeller were falling behind until it was too late.

The woman gathered a handful of the powder snow and shaped it in a ball. The scientists followed suit. As their snowballs were ready, Bev signalled Price and Zeller to throw them with a small nod. They held out their hands and threw the balls.

Two of them landed behind the collar of Will's coat, coldness biting his skin. Zeller was the only one bold enough to hit Hannibal – but only his (expensive) coat. Yet anyway, he was going to regret it later.

The triad started to laugh. "Gotcha!" exclaimed Beverly. She was thrilled that she could catch Will Graham off guard and perhaps get an opportunity to start a snowball battle. And she also wanted him to let off some steam and have fun amongst all the murder solving.

Both Will and Hannibal turned round and gave the team a disgruntled, almost deadly look. Price and Zeller looked alarmed, but Bev's complacent grin didn't disappear from her face.

"Is this how you're playing it now, Ms Katz? Trying to intimidate me with snowballs?"

"You're not getting away with this so easily," said Will, rubbing the snow off his neck and coat. It really felt cold, and he didn't like it.

He looked at all three of them gradually, and then turned his head to Hannibal. They locked gazes. They both knew what they were thinking of.

"What do you say about a small revenge, Dr Lecter?"

"I think that is an excellent idea, Will." They both bent down to scoop some snow to make big snowballs – but so did Team Sassy Science.

When they stood up and set their snowballs up, the looks on their face looked like they could kill.

***

Jack checked his watch for what felt like the millionth time. Not only Graham was late, but also Beverly, Price, and Zeller were nowhere to be found. Truth be told, he'd give anything to speak to Dr Lecter at least – but of course, that man wasn't anywhere near his office either.

There was a case he required Will Graham's expertise for, and he wasn't even answering his damn phone! What on earth was going on that day that everyone was missing, not only the serial killer they were looking for?

Jack decided to act. If they won't go to him, he'll go find them himself. He quickly put on his coat and strolled out of his office.

"Mrs Higgins, have you seen Professor Graham anywhere? Or special agent Katz?" he asked one of his colleagues as he met her in the doorway. He didn't want to go to the cold outside unless really necessary. It was below zero.

"No, sorry, I didn't, Jack." The woman continued on her way, but then she paused and turned her head to Jack in realisation, "Actually, have you seen Malicki and Jenkins? I can't find them anywhere either."

"Those are the recruits, right? No, I'm afraid. …Do you think Graham and company have something to do with it?" He had a hunch something he wasn't going to like was behind the odd absence of his team.

Mrs Higgins shrugged and followed Jack outside. "Well, we better find out."

It took walking fewer than twenty metres from the entrance to see the reason. A real war was going on.

Or rather, a snowball fight between a team of Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, and the two aforementioned recruits and a team of Beverly Katz, Brian Zeller, and Jimmy Price. It looked intense.

Price got a snowball directly in his face and yelled, "That's not fair, Dr Lecter! I wasn't looking!"

"Ha! You missed!" shouted Will as Brian's ball flew past him and hit a tree.

Amanda Jenkins threw two snowballs, and they both hit Beverly, who was gathering snow to make an extra-large snowball to attack Hannibal with. "Now *that* wasn't fair, girl!"

Jack couldn't watch it any longer. Did a bunch of adult FBI personnel really have to behave as small children and start a snowball fight as soon as there was more than one centimetre of the white substance laying on the ground? And did more than twenty people stand round them and watched the fight with utter fascination and clapped their hands every time someone got it?

He approached the group (careful to avoid flying snow) apace, with a frown on his face. Mrs Higgins gladly stayed out of it.

Although, he couldn't very well near them unnoticed. Brian caught sight of him and shouted (mostly at Bev), "Good you're here, sir, we're kinda outnumbered and really could use a reinforcement!"

He couldn't be serious! Jack whistled loudly. "What the hell you lot think you're doing? Stop acting childish and get back to work RIGHT NOW!"

Everyone suddenly ceased to move. They hung their hands, dropped the snowballs on the ground, and bowed their heads in silence.

They had to admit they let themselves be carried away and their little game went overboard.

Jack walked to them. The group faced the ground guiltily, not daring to look Jack Crawford in the eye. He gave all of them a withering look, an especially long one to Hannibal – who dusted off his coat absently.

"Well, I thought at least some of you were responsible and mature enough to stay out of this foolishness," he pointed out, gazing at the latter. "Dr Lecter."

He perhaps did not expect Hannibal's involvement – but what he expected less was getting hit by a snowball as well.

"Beverly!" he shouted at the smirking person responsible for it. "Now quit the shit and go inside. You can have a rematch after your working hours are over."

Eggnog

“Admit it, I was right.”

“In what, precisely?” Hannibal looked Will in his eyes.

“That it’s no proper Christmas without eggnog,” Will clarified, sleepy.

Hannibal pondered for a second. “Well… perhaps, if you insist.”

“Perhaps, Hannibal? You drank like a bottle of it.” Will cocked his head in Hannibal’s direction.

“And you drank more than that, love. Your point?” Hannibal shifted closer to Will and started to rub patterns on the exposed skin of Will’s chest and belly.

“You said drinking eggnog was under your standards,” replied Will matter-of-factly. He was smiling, though, and enjoying himself.

“I never said that, Will. …Are you sure you’re alright?” Hannibal whispered. The moves were unconscious.

“Then you thought it. Or did I think it…?” Will stared at the ceiling, unsure of his own mind.

Hannibal cut the absent train of thoughts dryly. “Will.”

His hand travelled lower and beneath the hem of Will’s pyjama bottoms.

“Don’t Will me, Hannibal. And stop-stop doing that with your hand—”

“Do you not like it?” He was only touching his hipbone and thigh with an intention to wake him up a bit, but the bothered tone in Will’s voice made him more determined about what he wanted to do to him, and he moved to his cock.

Will liked it. Oh, he did. He was half-hard already, and he felt arousal penetrate his exhausted body and his heart beat a little faster. But he was a bit too drunk and a bit too tired for sex. He’d only be taken advantage of (which Hannibal loved doing).

“Not that I wouldn’t like it, I really do, but I don’t really think—”

Did he truly reject the opportunity for inebriated lovemaking on Christmas Day? Hannibal tried a different tactics. “What about this, then?”

He moved to his stomach again, to the navel area. He softly and very slowly ran over the skin with the tips of his fingers and fingernails.

“Ha-Hanni, that fucking tickles!” Will protested, trying to smack Hannibal’s hand away with his. He giggled, despite really not wanting to.

“I didn’t know you were ticklish, Will,” Hannibal smiled darkly. Now when he knew the effect, he felt even stronger desire to resume his actions.

“I-I surrender, just stooooop!” Will was giggling all over, trying to kick Hannibal in his legs. Mostly unsuccessfully, as he reacted quickly enough to move out of his tipsy partner’s feet’s way.

“I’ve discovered your weakness, Will. I won’t let you go that easily.”

“Aaah-no-just—” Will couldn’t even find words. He just wanted to get away from Hannibal he’d do anything. And, to his luck, he managed to grab one of his wrists and wiggle away from him – on the floor. He didn’t realise he lay on the edge of the bed and there was only void behind him.

“Ouch! Shit!” Will cursed. There was also a dog’s yelp.

“Will?”

Hannibal rolled on his stomach to peek under the bed’s edge. Will lay on his back, arms limp alongside his body and eyes closed. He said nothing, and nor he looked like getting up.

“Love?” he asked again. There still was no response from the man. “Are you alive?”

“Yeah. I just—I think I’m gonna stay here. You’re mean to me,” mumbled Will, sounding as though offended. He looked like he was going to bed down right there, next to Encephalitis.

“If you think I was being mean then you ha—”

Will cut in on him, “‘m ticklish. That wasn’t nice. The thing before was.”

“Fine, if you want to behave like a child and sleep on the floor with the dog,” insinuated Hannibal. He rolled on his back and his side of the bed. There would definitely be no sex now.

“No, no dog. I want you, Hanni.”

“Then go to the bed with me,” he proposed. He cared about Will’s comfort. Letting him sleep on the floor wasn’t something he’d be grateful for in the morning.

“But you’re gonna use my intoxicated state against me and tickle me again.”

“I solemnly swear I won’t, Will.” As much as he’d wish to do so, they both still were adults, and promises are promises.

“Solemnly swear?” questioned Will in doubtful and yet hoping tone. Hannibal thought he indeed acted as a child sometimes.

“Absolutely,” he assured him. “Come here.”

“Okay.” Will propped himself on his elbows to stand up, but in doing so, he pressed Encephalitis’ tail to the ground. She squealed and barked twice. Will let her go at once, and she ran to the other side of the bedroom. “Uh—sorry, Cephie.”

He finally brought himself to stand up and plop down on the bed. He sighed as he touched down; he didn’t feel exactly well after the copious feast complemented by so much eggnog.

Will lacked strength or idea to cover himself with the duvet he was lying on, so Hannibal had to pull it out from underneath him and cover him. “Now, that’s better.”

Will started to drift off already. Hannibal lay on his side and watched him. Even in such state, he was beautiful.

“I love you,” Hannibal whispered before he fell asleep completely. He needed to say it.

“Love you, too,” Will whispered back, fatigue taking over him.

“And I’d say we omit eggnog next time.”

“Nope. It’s no proper Christmas without eggnog.”

Holiday Cards

Chapter Notes

> okay. today I lacked inspiration, motivation, time, and good mood, so I'm telling you, this one's not happy (and probably really bad but whatever). also Malana.

Alana flicked through the mail she collected from the mailbox earlier in the morning. They were mostly bills, but there were few holiday cards mixed between them, too.

Mr Truman, pass. Mr and Mrs Bourne, pass. The Prestons, pass. Oh, Jack Crawford. She could open that one. There was a gold bell, red ribbons, and glitters. Probably a cheap card worth few cents, but remembering and making the actual effort couldn't be put a price on.

Reading it, Alana smiled. And then she moved to another, while sipping at a cinnamon latte.

There were two more envelopes with their employees' addresses. She put them aside on the table with an intention of reading them later, as well as the bills. But then she came across a card with a name she would never expect to see among them. She was fairly shocked, and a tad angry at the same time.

She froze, holding the card in one hand and the rest of the mail in the other. She slowly laid those on the coffee table, staring at the handwriting.

> *Hello, Alana and Margot*
>
> *I know things didn't exactly go as they should between us and we parted as all but the friends we once used to be, but I wanted to wish you both well and say merry Christmas. I have all I could ask for now – and I hope for you to have the same. I give you a binding promise we will leave you to your content, wealthy life and never go after you again. A deal is a deal. Live your life and be happy, that is all I'm asking of you.*
>
> *Best wishes,*
>
> *Will Lecter*

How dares he? After all they have done, sending a Christmas card like it was nothing? And he even has the audacity to write that name and boast of it like a proud peacock?

"Mum, what's that? Is somethin' wrong?" her son asked, grabbing her by her forearm. Even in his age, he could tell things indeed weren't quite alright.

But of course, she only feigned a smile and answered, "No, no, nothing's wrong, sweetheart, mum just has too much unpleasant business to do."

She got up and took the little boy by his tiny hand. “Let’s take this and get rid of it, okay? And then we’ll find mama and open our presents, what do you say?”

She’ll better forget it before it ruins her mood for good. And before Margot finds out about it.

Eskimo Kisses

They were already at the doorstep, and Hannibal was just about to knock, when Will suddenly paused. He stopped before the first of two steps, unsure of his decision. Their decision.

There was going to be too many people. People he didn't like, because they looked down on him (and his husband, too) or presented him with otherwise uncomfortable glances. He couldn't tell if it were because of the scar on his face or because of the fact he and Hannibal were two married men.

Moreover, he barely spoke their language, since they have settled down in Austria only few weeks ago and all he remembered from Hannibal's lessons was how to introduce himself and all that fundamental knowledge (and Hannibal may or may not be responsible for it).

No, that was Hannibal's natural territory, not his. The smart set who enjoy going to the opera and theatre, organising fancy parties, or prattling about other wealthy people while backbiting those with different social status.

Will thought he could get used to it after those years of experience—but then there was the fall, and it was just the two of them, hiding, blending into the crowd. He thought everything has changed, but Hannibal was Hannibal, and he still had friends he kept in touch with or enemies whose business cards he saved in case their discourtesy went too far.

It was a quiet household with a small Christmas tree and classic rock vinyls one day and a reception with gourmet food, champagne, and obligatory tuxedos the other. Truly exceptional.

Will knew he agreed to go and that he thought it was nothing and he got rid of his displeasure for socialising, or at least kept it under control, yet now he would rather back out of it if possible.

"Will, is everything all right?" Hannibal turned round and spoke, therefore brought Will from the distant land of thought back to reality.

"It's just—I'm not sure whether this is a good idea."

Hannibal turned round with a look of fondness on his face of all possible expressions. He stepped away from the door, and walked to Will.

"Will, if this is too much on you, I am sure Mr Ebner won't be crossed with us if we do not show up—"

"No, no, you were looking forward to this, love. I simply need few more minutes to, um, breathe and prepare for the company of all those people mentally. It's-it's okay."

Will took a deep breath and pinched the bridge of his nose. Few more of those deep inhales and exhales and he will, hopefully, be okay and ready to face the exhausting events of the evening.

Hannibal stepped in his space. He took Will's face in the palms of his hands and pressed his nose and forehead against his. It was a simple but deeply affectionate and sweet gesture, and really, the love and comfort sparkling between them made Will smile even, if fractionally.

Hannibal nuzzled his nose closer, breathing in the scent of his cologne and (much better) aftershave. They stood there like that awhile – until Will wasn't sure it was all right and he could bare it all bravely with a faux smile for the guests and a genuine one for his one and only Hannibal.

With his husband, he could go through anything. That party was just one of many. Technically it was nothing in comparison to what he – they both – have experienced.

"We can go. It's fine."

"Are you sure, Will?"

"Yeah, I'm sure. I love you."

"I love you too."

Christmas Lights

Hannibal opened the box marked ‘Christmas lights’. He pulled twelve plastic bags with very much snarled light flexes out of it. Then he took the first one – a colourful one with the blinking function – with a design of hanging it on the tree, but as he soon found out, it was an entwined mess of diodes and cords. He couldn’t even locate the ending.

And well, he actually lived under the presumption he coiled the lights nicely and better organised.

“Now good luck untangling it, Hannibal,” Will snorted as he took another bag and put it on the table. He had no intent to do so himself.

However, Hannibal had a different opinion. “No, no, you are going to help me with that, Will. It was more or less your idea to decorate our house with lights after all, was it not?”

Will sighed. It was true. He loved the magical glow and yuletide atmosphere the created, and he knew they were an inseparable part of the holidays – but he hated disentangling them.

He took the flex he has just put aside reluctantly, and got to work.

“Why do you even have so many Christmas lights in the first place?”

“That is a very long story hidden behind a door I haven’t opened for a very long time and nor I wish to,” Hannibal replied dryly. The expression on his face transformed from amused and flirtatious to hurt and contemplative. He stared at the floor blankly, mindlessly working on the lights.

It had something to do with Mischa and his childhood. Will knew. He did not ask anymore.

They were both silently disentangling, until Will got angry at the impossible knots and loops he couldn’t figure out and uttered few silent swearwords. He really really wished to dash it on the floor and kick it flying far away.

That made Hannibal return back to reality and smile again. Actually chuckling, he asked, “Will, what did the lights do so terrible that you have to vent your anger on them?”

“Nothing. But it’s like earphones ten times worse. I can’t fucking crack it!”

Hannibal finished his light cord. He approached Will, taking the especially tangled one from him.

“Do you think we can be more successful together then?” he looked him in the eye, cocking his head. “Hold the plug, I’ll stretch it so we could take a better look at the knots.”

“Who would have guessed Hannibal Lecter could be such an untidy person when it came to forgotten things hidden in boxes in the basement?”

Sledging

“A sledge, Will, really?” Hannibal gave his husband a sceptical look. He was holding an old wooden sledge that belonged to him as a child and his father before that.

“Yeah. I found it in the cellar. And since we haven’t set foot outside due to all the snow, I thought we could have some fun,” grinned Will, nonchalant. Whispering, he added, “I mean, other kind of fun.”

Because spending three days holed up in bed does involve a lot of cuddles and snuggling and thorough shags.

“But sledging? That’s *fun* appropriate to children. We are long past that life stage, Will.” Hannibal seemed to be truly determined to talk Will out of it. And was he actually pouting?

“If you insist on outside activities, I would suggest cross-country skiing. That is a more suitable activity for men of our age.”

But he wasn’t the only hell-bent one. It was the sledge on which he used to go down that small hillock near his house in Louisiana. He wanted to share those happy memories with his husband too. He wanted to place them within his memory palace.

“No. I insist upon riding down the hill on this – or you will walk the dog for the next two weeks. And there will be no sex.”

“Wicked, are you? Is this another way to repay me for all the wrongs and evildoings I have inflicted on you in the past?”

“No, surviving the fall was a sufficient punishment for the both of us. This is simply for my own pleasure. Dress up, Hannibal, and get ready.”

“It’s too small for the both of us,” huffed Hannibal. Even wrapped in a thick coat and gloves and standing above Will who already sat on the sledge, he couldn’t quit the complaints.

“Put your arms around me and hold tight,” Will ordered, looking him straight in the eyes.

“Will, do I have to—”

“Yes. Shut up and get on. I may or may not promise I won’t throw you off the sled mid-ride.”

“That is a very equivocal promise.”

“I guess you just have to trust me, love.” He smiled and turned to face the white emptiness before him. There was no one around. The hill was theirs. Using the excuse of being seen and laughed at by strange toddlers was impossible.

Hannibal grudgingly sat behind Will, and wrapped his arms round his waist. He was halfway sitting in the air, glad the man in front of him provided him at least some stability. He still had to hold his legs up in the air if he wanted the ride to be smooth and over soon.

Will gave the sledge a push using his feet. He was thrilled like a child and enjoying it.

They started to move downwards, faster by each metre. Freezing wind and sprays of snow blew in their faces. “Wooohooo!” screamed Will.

Hannibal haven’t seen him as happy and excited in a long time (regardless of previous morning).

He rested his chin on Will’s shoulder, the feeling of exhilaration starting to come to him too. This was actually a satisfying exchange for the darkness and manipulation their relationship abounded in previously.

(Yet, that changed nothing about the fact it was quite humiliating – for him at least.)

The hill perhaps was high, but it certainly wasn’t infinite. The point where one has to brake the sledge came about now. But as they were quite heavy together, it only continued to gain speed, and became uncontrollably dashing toward a cluster of birches that marked the ending of the rideable part of the hill.

Both Will and Hannibal dug their heels in the snow in order to stop. They slowed the sledge down, but stopping it was out of option. There were only metres left before they inevitably crash into the trees.

Will leant over to the side and therefore deviated from the course. They began to turn right, but falling was certain by now. It was better to topple over to the snow than end up in a hospital though, even if it meant hearing more complaints and never going sledging again.

They collapsed into the snow. It hurt slightly, but mostly it was cold on their hands. Will lay on Hannibal with the most of his weight, having him pinned against the ground and trapped under his body.

He beamed. He moved nowhere. “It wasn’t that bad after all, wasn’t it?”

“Yes, it was.” Hannibal pulled Will closer to him.

“No, it wasn’t. You had fun, Hannibal. Admit it.”

“Maybe,” he cocked his head. Will stole a quick kiss from him.

Hannibal reached for another. He was irresistible.

Will quickly got up and stretched out his hand for Hannibal to take it and rise. “Let’s go home, you big dork.”

He got up as well. Will went to pick up the sledge that halted against a nearby tree. Luckily. it was in one piece.

“We’re not doing this again.”

“No, we’re not.”

Holiday Jumper

Chapter Notes

> This one was written in a hurry, and it's kinda bad. Uhhh I'm sorry, I haven't had any good idea. Weasley jumpers are the only thing I could think of, and why the hell not?

Let’s just forget the rules for a while. Let’s just forget the Fat Lady’s peeved shouts. The boy knows the password, and that gives him the right to enter, correct? He needs to see him.

Hannibal bursts into the Gryffindor common room, looking for his boyfriend. He holds a Christmas present containing something soft and light under his arm. It is from Will’s mother.

He sees Will immediately, sitting in one of the armchairs with his two presents in his hands. His friends, Jack and Reba, sit in near him, excitedly clattering about something that involves feast and decorations.

“Will!” he calls, delighted. “Your mother sent me a present!”

Will looks up, fairly surprised, and so do his friends. They stare at him. “Hannibal! What- you’re not supposed to be here!” He knows he told him the password a week ago, but he didn’t know he would actually come. Hannibal was all rules.

Jack whispers, worried about penalties, “I hope you know that if one of the professors catches you here, Hannibal, we’re all gonna be in a shitload of trouble.”

“No one will catch him, Jack.” Will actually gives him a withering look. Once the surprise is over, he is glad to have him there on Christmas Eve. He was about to visit him anyway. “Come here. And yeah, she did, didn’t she?”

“I wonder what’s inside?”

“An itchy jumper with the first letter of your name, I dare say. Just like mine,” he lifts the present from his mum up in the air and jiggles it. Hannibal reaches to snatch it from him in an attempt to return it for a price of a kiss, but Will is quick enough.

He unwraps it by literally tearing it open. Hannibal sits in his lap and presses a soft kiss on his cheek. Opening his present, he notices Jack roll his eyes at them.

“Ha!” Will pulls out a burgundy jumper with a large green W in the middle. He got this combination in his third year. “Told you. Now, of what hideous colour is yours, love?”

“Do you not like it?” Hannibal asks, raising his eyebrow. If he got a jumper like that from his mother—

“Actually, no. It’s ugly and itchy, and if you got it every Christmas with a note to send a photo of you wearing it, you’d get tired of it too. Why can’t I get normal presents like Reba here, for example?”

“What is normal about a book on muggle-world animals?” the girl wonders, though leafing through it.

Hannibal takes his. Will was right; it is indeed an identical knitted piece of clothing, only brown with a golden H. He has to smile at the thought of Mrs Graham looking at pictures of annoyed Will wearing that jumper and standing in front of a large Christmas tree.

“But why not? I think it’s lovely. I love mine, and I am going to wear it proudly. It will tell everyone at Hogwarts that we are together,” he grins, and gives Will another kiss. He takes off his cloak and hastily puts the jumper on.

“You say that because it tells you she acknowledged you, but you think it’s awful anyway. I know you do.”

“No, I don’t. I love it. It is from your mum. And you are going to wear it whether you like it or not.”

“Et tu, Hannibal?”

Gingerbread House

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"What's that?" asked Abigail, looking at Will. She held two dusty old books she had browsed through.

Will touched the spine of a very old storybook that actually almost fell apart. He used to have the same one as a kid. It evoked the memories of his mother reading him about Rumplestiltskin or Hansel and Gretel, and he wandered off into his mind.

Then he realised the girl spoke to him. "What?"

"That book. You seemed to have lost in your mind the moment you saw it. It triggered something. Memories," Abigail noted. She was starting to be good at assessing people.

"Um, it's nothing. Just an ancient storybook I had as a kid," Will replied evasively. He out his hand down, and turned his head to her. "What do you have here?"

Abigail shook her head. "Oh, nothing interesting, either," she paused, thinking about what Will had said. Her expression turned melancholic. "You know, my parents have never read me goodnight stories."

"Oh, really? I'm sorry for that." But then again, he knew what kind of man Garrett Jacob Hobbs was. All he cared about was teaching his daughter how to hunt and lure and skin. And her mother— "You have missed a lot of irreplaceable memories and adventures then."

"…And terrifying tales about deception and murder," she laughed. So did Will.

"I remember I've never really liked those," he admitted. It was true – yet, he regretted he didn't let his mum read them to him even so, because one accident later, he has never heard her voice again. "Some of the fairytales were just too, um, traumatising and illogical."

"Yeah. Like Little Red Riding Hood. 'What big eyes you have.' 'The better to see you with.' She was stupid," Abigail rolled her eyes, the smile spreading wider.

"Or the witch in the gingerbread house. Horrible." He smiled, but it couldn't reach his eyes.

"You know who surely loves that one?"

In that moment, the door to the library opened, and the last member of their little family entered. He wore an apron and a subtle smile.

"Speak of the devil," Abigail whispered to Will. He registered the allusion.

"Are you two done with the decorations? Dinner is ready," Hannibal said, spreading out his hands in an invitation.

“Sure. Can’t wait,” replied the brunette, leaning into Will. “Surely he does.”

And yes, she was right, if someone asked her, or Hannibal. Both he and Mischa liked that German story when they were children. But no one, no one in the whole world knew, that it was actually based on a real-life experience of the brothers Grimm.

It wasn’t just a legend. Because one day, the men travelled to Lithuania, and drifted into the woods, where they found a strangely, suspiciously looking house.

It, of course, was not made of confectionery and sweets. However, the rest…

Once upon a time, there was an old woman with warts on her wrinkled face and old rags covering her body. She lived deep down in the woods in the land of Lithuania in a small, ruined cottage that was built of shreds of wood adorned with human blood…

No man from the village ever dared to set foot near the woman whom they called witch and her house, for if one did so, it became their doom. Because there was a reason so as to call her a hag.

She adored children most of all, and preferably on her dinner plate, roasted on wine and vegetables and served with fresh little potatoes. And if they swallowed the wicked woman’s bait and accepted her wonderful sweets, they tasted even better.

No one has ever heard of her name, only few of the oldest villagers who would rather sacrifice themselves than to ever utter the cursed word that brought only tragedy.

Mrs Jelena Lecter.

Chapter End Notes

don't blame me for this one okay it was all my mum's idea

Elf

Chapter Notes

> This is someting like a shopping centre AU. Like, everyone's civilian and they work in a shopping centre, get it? Also POV Malana.

“Look, mama, there’s Santa!” the little boy yells, and tugs at Margot’s hand. He starts to drag her toward the bearded man in red and his elves residing proudly at the centre’s large Christmas tree.

A girl approximately his age sits in his lap and talks to him about wishes. He bellows ho-ho-ho! from time to time, smiling at the child. There is a queue of children and their parents waiting for their turn to tell Santa Claus about what they want for Christmas to come – and Thomas Verger excitedly runs to join the line.

Margot just smiles and lets her son haul her to Santa’s site, Alana following close after them. She carries three paper bags of brand-name clothes and presents in her hands and a beam on her face. She used to love to go to shopping-mall Santas too when she was little.

“I wanna tell him about my wishes, mama,” Thomas says excitedly.

Alana strokes his hair. “Yes, you can tell him about your wishes, and maybe, if you’re super good, he will see what he can do about them. So maybe you’ll find all of those things under our big tree!”

The perfumer has always been excellent with kids, more so when she gave birth to her own son.

The girl climbs off Santa’s lap, and the elves give her a candy cane. Two boys, identical twins, replace her. The queue moves slowly.

“I promise I’ll even eat the veggies, mum!” Well, then it must be serious.

Alana takes his little hand in hers. She looks at the man in the costume and his two helpers – a paunchy, dark-skinned man in his forties or fifties and a scruffy looking one with glasses and a two-day stubble. The Santa himself radiates warmness and happiness, and his eyes are sparkling with nothing but sincerity.

And even though the eyes are all she can see of him, she recognises someone familiar under that red hat and white beard. She knows that man, she is sure of it!

Thomas impatiently hops on one leg several times repeatedly, which provides distraction and makes her look at him instead of reflecting on the man’s identity.

Then, however, her wife steps closer to her and whispers, “The Santa – isn’t that Hannibal Lecter, the chef from *The Golden Stag*?”

The penny drops at last. “Oh! From that gourmet restaurant from upstairs, right? Yes, that’s him! I knew I know him from somewhere!”

“And the elves, that’s Jack, the waiter, and Will—”

“—the cute bartender who gave us free drinks when he found out it was our anniversary,” adds Alana as she realises who the men in green suits are. How could she forget Will from *The Golden Stag*, a restaurant where she and her wife go on special occasions as celebrating birthdays or anniversaries?

“Yes, because my brother owns this place, Alana,” Margot laughs. She says that every time one of them brings up the mention of their second wedding anniversary. Her wife thought otherwise, though.

Alana gazes at the smaller elf. “Will doesn’t exactly seem to be enjoying it, though.”

The bartender-elf appears to be tired, sweaty, and tense – particularly in presence of screaming, rollicking children whom he has to gift with sweets as though meeting Santa isn’t enough. And some of them notice.

“He looks like he needs a drink.” Margot nods at Alana’s note.

Suddenly, their son tugs at their hands again, harder. “Mum, mama, let’s mooooove!” Fortunately (for the sake of all of them), he wasn’t listening to their conversation, and his belief in Santa Claus, his elves, and Rudolph isn’t ruined (yet).

The three of them move forward.

Alana thinks she’s going to buy the miserable elf that drink as soon as his mission of playing the centre’s elf is over.

Holiday Shopping

Chapter Notes

> I've no idea why did I come up with this, but it's not a traditional interpretation of the prompt 'holiday shopping'. It's dark. Well, Hannibal-esque. Warnings for murder, etc., etc. Also Abigail is alive.

Hannibal and Will put the heavy bags full of food on the kitchen table. Hannibal smiled darkly, “We have all ingredients for the Christmas menu; we must only purchase the meat yet.”

The man ran. He ran fast, desperately trying to escape the monsters in plastic suits that chased him as though he were an animal. He stumbled on the bumps and molehills hidden under cover of darkness of the night. He breathed heavily, sweated, smelling terrified.

The two men wore ecstatic, mischievous grins on their faces, and carried small knives that could be easily hidden in one’s pocket in their hands. They looked thrilled, aroused. They enjoyed the wild chase.

Insane psychopaths, they were. Coldblooded murderers.

They gained on him. He turned his head back; in that moment, he lost track of the snow-covered field beneath his feet, and tripped over a higher snowdrift. He attempted to get on his feet, unsuccessfully. That was the end of him.

“Shit!” he cursed. Repeatedly. He began to crawl, frozen snow chafing the bare skin on his hands and face. Lecter and Graham were closely behind him.

“Please, please, please, I beg of you—”

He knew begging has never helped any soon-to-be victim of murder. Yet—

“Please, spare me, I’ll give you anything—” his voice was trembling. He felt a hand seize his leg. It was to be over soon. His life. He was horrified to death. Quite literally.

“You have been very rude, Mr Patrickson.”

“And you will now pay for your crimes.” Will held him by his feet so he couldn’t wiggle away.

“Exterminating you, we are doing you and this city an immeasurable favour.” Hannibal held his head. He pressed the blade against the man’s neck.

He was shivering. “No, no, no,” he whispered. The endeavour was utile.

“Goodbye, Mr Patrickson.” Hannibal’s knife sank into flesh as he cut his throat open. Blood gushed out of the cut, spattering Hannibal’s face and suit. At least it was quick.

“You will make a savoury roast.”

“So, did you go Christmas shopping yet?” asked Abigail, looking at Will and Hannibal at the other side of the screen. They were chatting on Skype, as they did every Wednesday and Saturday.

“Yes,” Will was the first to reply, “we arranged all yesterday. What about you?”

“Absolutely not!” she admitted. Her resonant laughter echoed through the dormitory room. “College is hard, you know. And I still have a week, right?”

“That you do, Abigail, but certain things are better taken care of sooner. For instance, providing a terrified pig to slaughter.”

“Well, then I’m lucky I’m not the one the one to arrange that, Hannibal,” she laughed again. In the past two months, she was happier than ever.

Abigail was quickly growing up and forgetting about all of the afflictions of her past. About her father.

“I hope you are coming for the holidays,” Hannibal changed the topic, assuring himself. He was counting with her presence. A family ought to be together during the holidays. “You can’t miss the dinner.”

“I would never. If you’re serving some kind of specialty made of that terrified pig…?”

“What else would we serve, my dear child? What else?”

“I can’t wait!” she said excitedly.

“Us neither,” remarked Will with a smile. When she was away studying college, they barely got to see their daughter – or whatever Abigail Hobbs was to them anyway.

“And do you know what else I can’t wait to see?” They both raised an eyebrow. “Your faces when you unwrap your presents… which I haven’t bought yet.”

“You should hasten to go shopping, then.”

“As I should do so with carving the meat.”

Secret Santa

Chapter Notes

> This is really bad. Sorry. YOI episode 11 happened, and I couldn't think about anything else.

Quantico organised a Secret Santa gift exchange. Of course they did. Special agent Beverly Katz was in charge of the event. Of course she was.

And of course she has compelled Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, and Alana Bloom to participate in it as though they (two of them) longed worked for the Bureau as all the other people against whom they were in disadvantage of not being acquainted with them well enough to be able to come up with a reasonable present, and vice versa.

That was the reason why they found themselves blindly browsing Baltimore's food shops (Hannibal), the city streets (Alana), and Christmas markets in D.C. (Will). Neither of them has drawn a name of one another, as unlucky they were.

For Hannibal, it was Mrs Higgins from the Department of Behavioral Sciences. Will has drawn out a name of one of Beverly's lab technicians, and the name on Alana's piece of paper belonged to a cook from the canteen (a head cook whose lunches everyone except Dr Lecter greatly appreciated, mind you).

Secret Santa, that was a collective activity all three of them – and, honestly, the half of FBI – did not exactly endorse. Beverly Katz was going to pay for making them do it. Definitely. And since the office party was yet to come, the opportunity was only waiting to be fulfilled.

The simplest thing they could do was to make the person who was giving her a gift buy something ridiculous, useless, and absolutely embarrassing. (If the person needed persuading at all.) The second simplest thing was to bring lots of alcohol and (inconspicuously) make her drink. The last things were to get together, arrange the vengeance, and keep their mouths shut in front of Price and Zeller.

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? Alana texted to both Will and Hannibal. And three more people.

I definitely am. Let's meet up and come up with a plan, answered Will immediately.

Gimme 20 bucks and call me a psychic, said another friend of hers.

I think I know what you're alluding to, Dr Bloom. And I'm saying yes.

Alana smiled, and pocketed her mobile. She has come across a shop straightforwardly screaming *perfect secret Santa Christmas gifts* at her, but that was beside the point. Once she gets what she is obliged to get, she can start plotting.

Star

I wondered if our stars were the same, Hannibal once said.

He did not have to wonder anymore. He knew the stars moved across the cosmos and aligned to do all possible and impossible so as to make the wish a reality.

They were the same.

And Will and Hannibal sat on the terrace of their small log cabin in rattan armchairs, wrapped in warm, fuzzy blankets, drinking mulled wine with oranges from matching Christmas mugs decorated with jolly snowmen and reindeer. The mugs helped to warm their cold hands.

It was snowy and freezing at the time of the year in Sweden – but they omitted the fact, and gazed at the captivating dark sky and bright stars shining as diamonds on a satin gown of Nyx, the goddess of night.

Today, a sporadic occasion of a picture-perfect, clear firmament occurred. If they were fortunate enough to win favour with the goddess, they might witness a real aurora borealis.

“The unique, exceptional beauty of tonight truly surpasses many natural occurrences I have beholden.”

“It is magnificent.”

Hannibal brought himself to tear away from the mesmerising heavens, and looked at Will with a myriad of different micro-expressions of admiration, adoration, and enchantment all at once. The moonlight did right by his scarred visage.

“You are magnificent.”

Hannibal was quite certain he has blushed. “You are, *mylimasis*. There is nothing to be abashed at.”

The corners of Will’s mouth stretched in a sheepish smile unconsciously. He continued to stare at the sky above him and sip at his drink sans any word.

They sat in utter silence then. The sole action that disturbed it minutely was an occasional sip and gulp and a clink of the mug being laid on the coffee table between their armchairs.

Time has passed, seconds, minutes, until Hannibal caught a glimpse or a falling star, and another following closely after it.

“Make a wish, Will. The Quadrantids are falling.”

“I already have everything I could wish for, Hannibal,” replied Will, turning his head to him. “This life with you.”

But secretly, he did wish for something when another meteor ripped up the black sky with its burning, shining tail and lit it up for a scarce second.

He wished for the moment to last forever, even if they failed to sight the northern lights.

Presents

Hannibal and Will had two rules about the exchange of Christmas presents: number one was that they might have only given each other exactly one present and no more than that. Number two was that it must have been a non-expensive, small gift representing their love for each other in the most decent and attentive way, even if it were completely useless and stupid.

Will, a huge fan of popular television series he was, jokingly called the arrangement The Sheldon Cooper Regulation. Hannibal thought ridiculous and refused to use the term – because he did not understand the show, and if Sheldon Cooper were an existing person, he would be happy to track him down and make dinner of him if it meant he would shut up.

Will laughed at him for it, and brought it up at every mention of presents on purpose.

In short, that was why Will's gift contained a rectangular blue mug in the shape of the Doctor's space-time ship TARDIS and a Sherlock Holmes hat was inside Hannibal's. It expressed their love for British TV and mutual understanding perfectly.

These presents were more precious and valuable than expensive cologne, alcohol, clothes, paintings. They had money; they could acquire that anytime. But objects as ordinary as those, and not ordinary at all, stood for love and domesticity and giving in to all they both could offer.

That was why they were the happiest to discover they both had the same idea and purchased a piece of fan merchandise.

"A TARDIS mug, Hannibal? It will ruin the aesthetics of your cupboard!" joked Will as he unwrapped his present. He examined every part of it closely.

"It's our cupboard, Will. And, as I know, you have always wished to have one."

"Okay, I admit, I have. Thank you, Hannibal," he smiled. "Now unwrap you present."

Hannibal tore the wrapping paper quickly, since Will's gift-packing skills weren't as advanced as his. He pulled the hat out, and for a moment, his eyes shone with utter delight. He turned it upside down and back, fascinated.

"Put it on," Will prompted him. Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "It's my gift, and you have to wear it."

Hannibal slowly lifted it to his head, and put it on. "This hat, Will, certainly belongs among the best presents I have ever received," he said, proud of Will's perfect skills of finding perfect presents. "Have I had a magnifying glass, I could call myself Sherlock Holmes."

"In fact," Will grinned, and leant forward, "do just that, because I think the Sheldon Cooper Regulation can't be observed this time." He put his hand on Hannibal's cheek, caressed it

softly, and kissed his partner deeply.

Because he loved the Sherlock Holmes hat too.

Reindeer

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Everyone ought to have a King of Christmas, the most majestic, most radiant, glowing, most noble decoration one had, Hannibal said. That decoration was meant to dominate one's habitat. It was supposed to jump out at a person when they entered the room in proudly stood in or approached the tree it hung on.

The King (or Queen) of Christmas should represent the spirit and very idea of Christmas and spread the energy to everyone who lay eyes on it.

Hannibal's King was a distinguished crystal reindeer standing on a base as though made of ice, extending its antlered head, and bending its right forelimb in a step. It decorated the midst of his dining table.

When one looked at it from one particular spot, one could see it reflect the warm yellow light from the Christmas lights, by which Hannibal festooned not just the tree but also all of the living room and bedroom. It shone like a star.

And when he and Will lunched or dined at the table, they looked the King right in the big, beautiful, sad eyes, and saw the reflections of their past and present.

That was the magic, the effect, of the King. That was what it did to a person. That was what it was supposed to do to a person.

And it made them look at each other and smile.

Chapter End Notes

(King of Christmas is my family's tradition... And that's what we say about it.)

Mistletoe

Chapter Notes

Based on this post.

Beverly, Jimmy, and Brian walked and walked and walked, and talked and talked and talked. They slowly moved across the room with wine glasses in their hands, and incessantly questioned Will and Dr Lecter about meaningless topics.

Bev, for some reason, had her shit-eating grin on during the entire evening, and made plenty of suggestive jests about the two of them. Will felt rather uncomfortable (frankly, the mere presence on the party made him feel so).

Will thought they found staying at one place dull and searched for contact with the rest of their colleagues, thus needed to walk. However, the truth lay elsewhere. It was just a part of a plan how to get them together, because they couldn't watch Will make puppy eyes on Hannibal and Hannibal ogle Will every single second of the time they spent together.

No one could watch the two of them any longer. They began to cook up their genius design weeks ago, and now it finally was time to put it in motion.

They stopped as soon as they were sure Will and Hannibal's attention was focused solely on them and not the rest of the room, the ceiling in particular. The ceiling where a bundle of mistletoe hung.

Bev pretended not to notice it and casually continued to sip at her wine, until she suddenly looked up. She put her hand on her mouth in feigned surprise and said, "Oh look, there's a mistletoe! Looks like you two are gonna have to kiss now!"

Will and Hannibal tilted their heads back, sighting the green branches hanging above them. They both shot a very exasperated glance at the trio before stepping closer to each other and looking each other in the eye.

"Well, it seems they are right, Dr Lecter. We must honour the tradition."

"Yes, we certainly must."

Hannibal leant into Will, closing his eyes automatically, and gave him a kiss on his lips that lasted a bit too long to be their first. They were way too casual.

Bev and the boys casted confused looks at each other. "What the hell was that?" Brian asked.

“Yeah, they looked as if they kissed every morning before going to work for quite some time,” Beverly answered, incredulous. She gulped down the rest of her wine.

“Are those two actually dating all along—”

“—and forgot to tell us?”

The men in question pulled away, wide smiles spreading on their face and eyes shining. They turned to their shocked colleagues.

“Oops, looks like we’ve forgotten to tell you a little something, haven’t we, Hannibal?” Will looked at Dr Lecter, and put an arm round his waist possessively, so unlike his usual behaviour. (Well, they all were a bit tipsy from all the drinks they had.)

“Yes, we have indeed, how unprofessional of us, Will!” Hannibal joined in the game of playing innocent. “Will and I are steadily dating for the past two months.”

“Why couldn’t you just say so and spear us the effort,” mumbled Bev. She took Jimmy’s glass of wine and knocked it back as well. She rolled her eyes. “Idiots.”

I’m proud of you anyway, happy idiots.

Stocking

Margot took three identical red stockings with striped red-and-green bordering and small Christmas trees embroidered on the foot. The only distinctive element on each sock was a name of golden strands in the midst of the foot, circled by green holly leaves.

“Let’s hang the stockings, shall we?” she smiled at the little human being standing at her feet, staring at the red cloth with fascination typical for a child.

She was about to hook the one with his name on it, but his tiny hand on her hip stopped her.

“Let me do it!” he exclaimed. She raised an eyebrow, expecting him to show good manners as they’ve taught him to. “Please, mama!”

“Okay. Here you are, Tommy. Hang your stocking.” Margot handed it to him as a precious gift.

His eyes sparkled with excitement. However, he was too small to reach the fireplace ledge, thus his mama had to lift him up. Thomas proudly hooked the stocking on the nail, and whooped with delight at his achievement.

Margot kissed his hair. “That’s my good boy.” Then she took hers, and hooked it to the right of it.

“What’s going on in here?” Alana walked into the living room, scuffing her slippered feet. She carried a tray with three cups of steaming hot chocolate with whipped cream and cinnamon. Her mouth rose in a smile as well, seeing her wife and son so happy and engrossed in decorating.

“We’re hanging stockings, mum!”

“Why didn’t you wait for me? I want to hang my stocking, too!”

“We haven’t hung yours yet, dear. We couldn’t have let you miss the fun, right?” she looked at Thomas.

“Yeah!” he confirmed her statement with a clap of his hands.

“Then I must say you are very considerate, darlings.” She laid the tray on the coffee table, and took the stocking bearing her name from Margot.

She filled the last empty space on the fireplace by it. “There. Now Santa Claus can come to our mansion and leave few small presents for us all!”

Alana took Thomas in her arms, laughing sunnily. “But only if we kept the general terms of being nice during the year set only by Santa himself. What do you think, have we been nice?”

“The nicest in the world, mum! The nicest in the world!”

“Well, then I assume it must be true.” She flipped the tip of his nose, which made him break into a fit of giggles. Then she leant into Margot and gave her a quick kiss on the lips.

“It must,” the woman whispered.

Thomas yelled “Eww”, but they did not mind him. Little children did not understand.

“Now, let’s drink out chocolate before it gets cold.”

Carols

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will and Hannibal sat at the fireplace in utter silence. They listened to the crackling of the fire. Breathed in the spicy scents inseparably connected to Christmas. Let the spirit penetrate their minds and bodies to the bones.

A moment of silence, that was what they esteemed the most aside from their inconsequential pillow talks about love and life and death and God and the meaning of life.

A moment of silence filled their home.

Until it did not.

Low, melodic choral singing resounded from the doorstep. It added a touch to the purity of the spirit.

Any other time, Hannibal would find children coming from house to house with a Christmas song intrusive and even privacy invading if they crossed a certain boundary – yet today, as the magic and peace of the Yule beclouded his mind like a short drink, he closed his eyes, and listened.

Will looked at him. He hummed along with the tune covertly. It was just beautiful. The singing. And Hannibal. And the glimmering fire casting shadows and lights on his (their) faces. It was also relaxing. However,

they both stood up in the exact same moment, without notifying each other of the intent towards so, and walked to the door.

Hannibal unlocked and opened the door. It revealed six children, boys and girls, small and older, dressed in red, holding songbooks and small baskets. They were singing *Stille Nacht* in perfect synchronisation, in key, jolly.

Will and Hannibal smiled, and put an arm round each other’s waist. They listened to the end.

Chapter End Notes

Yes, I meant the German version. I still continue in the 'verse in which they travel to Cuba → Vienna → London.

Christmas Tree

Chapter Notes

SORRY EVERYONE I'M RUNNING OUT OF GOOD IDEAS (or ideas in general)
ALSO YOI HAPPENED SO I CAN'T EVEN THINK
THEREFORE I'M A BIT LATE WITH THIS

Hannibal became aware something was going on before he actually entered the house. He could hear music, loud music, resounding from the inside the moment he approached the wicket by few steps. Hearing few tones was enough for him to recognise it was Led Zeppelin.

What was Will doing, he thought. He rarely played music, never when in someone's – read his – company, let alone as loud. He has only been gone for an hour or so, shopping for groceries and necessary last minute presents for people who were not Will, and he already was up to something.

Hannibal walked across the snowy courtyard, leaving footprints in the white cover. He climbed the three stairs to the front door, and pulled at the handle with his elbow, for his hands were full of paper bags.

When the thick barrier ceased to be an obstacle to the sound, the song became louder and the lyrics were clearer, more distinct.

A-way, way down inside
A-honey, you need-a
I'm gonna give you my love, ah
I'm gonna give you my love, ah

"Will?" he called into the emptiness of the hallway, taking off his gloves and coat. He received no answer; Will probably couldn't hear him above the blasting music. Or could but ignored him.

He proceeded onwards. The music was clearly coming from the living room. On the way there, he stopped in the kitchen to lay the shopping aside and put all frozen good in the freezer.

"Will?" he called again.

All he could hear from his partner were muffled lyrics of the song. He was actually singing along with Robert Plant. He sounded *jolly*, and he actually *was*.

A short while later he discovered what was the reason behind Will's cheerful spirit.

The large fir of a Christmas tree they obtained a day ago stood in the midst of the room augustly, festooned with electric lights and tinsels of red and silver colour. On the very top of it, there was a silver star shining like a diamond. And then there was Will, hanging red and silver baubles on copper hooks, humming to *Whole Lotta Love*, almost excitedly decorating the tree as he wished to do since they bought it.

He said he hadn't decorated an actual Christmas tree for years. Living with no one but the pack, he had none. When he married Molly, she and Walter always did it. He truly wanted to have one with Hannibal on their first holidays together and help with the decorations (once they have agreed the theme was red and silver).

But then he turned round, and noticed the man in question stand in the doorway and stare at him fixedly, and he froze, holding a ball in each hand, mouth agape in an unsaid word.

"Uh—"

"There's no need to stop, Will, I was rather enjoying your singing," Hannibal smiled. He stepped closer. "And the tree is beautiful. Let's finish it together, shall we?"

Holiday Films

Chapter Notes

> This isn't exactly a typical concept of Xmas films (I could choose music too, but I hate all of those songs more than anything, so), but I BLOODY HAD TO OKAY. EPISODE 12, GUYS. EPISODE 12. Crazy headcanons ahead. Also, it's inspired by the amazing Janice Poon and her tweet.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will lay on the sofa with legs crossed a laptop in his lap. His headphones were sitting on his head to prevent Hannibal from making inappropriate comments about the kind of thing he was watching, therefore he could not hear the man sneak up on him from behind or sense his intent to hug him as a lovely surprise.

Which caused that it was not a lovely surprise, but it ended with Will shrieking out and sitting up abruptly, nearly hitting Hannibal in the chin with his hard skull.

“You startled me, Hannibal!” he said yet held back chuckles. He pressed pause, and took off the headphones. “Didn’t you notice I had my headphones on?”

“I have, but given your extraordinarily developed senses I thought you would notice me,” answered Hannibal with a soft smile but enigmatic look on his face. He was wondering what his mongoose watched that he wandered away from reality. “Besides, I told you dinner was ready in ten minutes. It has been almost twenty.”

“Sorry, I was—I always submerge myself in this. I’ll turn it off.”

Will moved the laptop closer, and Hannibal noticed it was some kind of Japanese animated series about what seemed like ice-skating, by the looks of the paused image. There was a young man in white-and-blue costume standing on ice.

“What is it that you’re watching, Will?”

“Ah, nothing. It’s an, um, anime about figure skating, nothing you’d find interest in. This is the final episode.”

“What makes you assume I wouldn’t find interest in such a thing? I’ve actually skated for several years as a young boy,” Hannibal replied matter-of-factly, and the answer frankly shocked Will. “Before I went to medical school.”

There still were so many things he didn’t know about Hannibal, despite he lived with him for a good year.

“You did?” he turned his head to look him in the eye.

“Yes.”

Will laughed. “I can’t picture that. You, Hannibal, doing pirouettes and jumping and wearing these sparkly costumes…”

“I’ve never worn these, but yes, I indeed did skate and dance ballet.”

“Well, I must admit, you do resemble Viktor quite a lot,” he said, still not averting his gaze. The blond hair parted on the right side, being born and raised in an East European country, possessing by lots of money, having an antisocial brunet with glasses for a fiancé… not to mention the newly gained piece of information about skating.

“Who?” Hannibal inquired. Of course he could not know.

“Yuuri’s fiancé.” When Will realised that didn’t make it any clearer, as he saw him raise an eyebrow. he added, “One of the main characters.”

Hannibal smiled. “Should I feel honoured or abashed?”

“That is a compliment, Hannibal. Viktor Nikiforov is a living Russian skating legend.” Will turned off the laptop, and stood up. Only now he found out his stomach was actually rumbling. He couldn’t wait to taste Hannibal’s Christmas Eve menu (he was forbidden to help him with).

“Will you make katsudon pirozhki for lunch tomorrow?” Will asked earnestly, walking to the dining room, side by side with Hannibal. He really wanted to try them even since Yuri’s grandfather made them for him.

“Katsudon pirozhki? Why?” Hannibal gave him a confused look, but if one looked closely, one could see many invisible expressions in his eyes.

What kind of strange combination is that? You can’t combine Japanese and Russian cuisine in such way, Will. That is deterioration of two delicious meals served separately.

“Why, Hannibal? You know what, let’s just watch it instead of the cheesy Christmas movies they’re airing on TV every year.”

They watched all twelve episodes in one night. (Watching it for the second time, and with Hannibal by his side, Will couldn’t help crying during certain moments.)

Next day, Hannibal and Will prepared a whole pile of katsudon pirozhki for lunch. Hannibal, naturally, managed to turn even them into an exquisite, mouth-watering gourmet specialty both Yuris would kill for.

“They’re vkusno,” Will said, and Hannibal replied in Russian. “Of course they are. We made them together.” Perhaps it wasn’t that ridiculous combination after all.

Chapter End Notes

I'm writing a sequel on 28th!

Candy Cane

Chapter Notes

> This is the oddest and craziest thing I've ever written. Forgive me.
> (But, you know, he's capable of anything, really.)

Everyone who met Dr Hannibal Lecter for the first time assessed he was a cold and humourless persona capable of appreciating perhaps only dry, black jests he elaborately devised himself. When they got to know him better, they found out he was full of metaphors and innuendos and loved to play a game of wit with anyone who had dared to.

However, no one could know the doctor as well as Will Graham – wholly and entirely. Because if they did, they would know he in fact delighted in pranking people he invited to his famed dinner parties if he were particularly bored by extremely dull events of the week.

Just as that one time at a party preceding the Christmas one, when he decided to test their falseness and hypocrisy by putting salt (*a lot* of salt) into his homemade candy canes and waiting for what they were going to say and what they were going to look like.

He was a psychiatrist, after all; he constantly played these games with people, observed them, studied their (pathetic) behaviour. His curious mind could never stop.

Because he was almost certain of who would do what upon discovering the canes are disgusting, which no one would ever expect from such a brilliant chef as him, the man who took pride in preparing the most savoury, sophisticated dishes coming from all over the world. And he wanted to know for sure.

Once he managed to get Will out of the kitchen, Hannibal could fulfil his genius intention. He exchanged a tenth of the prescribed amount of sugar for fine-grained sea salt. Changing the ingredients didn’t affect the consistency of paste in any radical way, so it shouldn’t be a problem – until someone tasted it.

He pulled the red and the white paste under his sugar lamp innocently, and then made longish rectangles of it. He always took two, and rolled and twisted them together into perfectly symmetric spirals he bent at one end.

They looked truly delicious, even tastier than candy canes one could buy at the markets… only missing some of the sugar. Hannibal let them cool down for few hours, and then they finally were ready to be served as spiteful presents on his dinner party.

"…and now, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for coming to the party and elating the ambiance by your presence by giving you a small present to eat or take home," Hannibal announced at the end of a toast in a solemn tone, yet internally grinning and screaming with self-satisfaction. He reached for a decorated paper box laid atop a nearby chest of drawers. "Homemade candy canes."

He opened the box. It revealed over twenty colourful sugar sticks, each decorated with an emerald bow neatly tied around the middle of the cane. They received an awkward applause.

When no one rushed to take one, he prompted his friends—acquaintances—with a nod and intense look burning a hole right in the head. Every sane person knew better than to affront Hannibal Lecter, so they each took one of the canes.

Hannibal did not. He stood at the host's place at the table proudly. He excitedly awaited the shocked but painfully hidden expressions on their faces inevitable appearing when having a lick of the cane.

These people lived in the world of pretence. They were forced to if they wished to maintain their position amongst Baltimore's cream of society – rich snobs who cared about good reputation, gossip, good looks, and good relations – and therefore ensure getting an invitation to next of Hannibal's parties.

They would rather say nothing about salty candy canes in front of him and bare it than not get it, for it was an immense honour. Complaint, that was a forbidden subject. Chitchat and cheers mattered.

They all generally thought they were the only ones with an odious sweet, therefore they kept their mouth shut, obediently licked it, and thought of throwing it into trash at home while deploring the party in front of their spouses, haven't they attended as well. All for making a good impression (read not making fools of themselves; they knew that would assure them a ban on attending Dr Lecter's New Year's Day party).

Nevertheless, that was the exact opposite of what Hannibal would consider morally right. One shouldn't lie and hide behind faux smiles for they worried about *status*, yet it was typical of people to do. His therapist in particular.

Bedelia sipped on her Champagne and ate the cane as though there was nothing wrong with it, although she appeared to start choking on it anytime soon.

Hannibal bathed in pleasure of watching it, smug as never. The corners of his mouth automatically formed a fulfilled minute smile. There was more deception in the house than at the theatre. Incredible joy to watch.

Well, until Will Graham, the one and only person from a world outside banquets and opera and full bank accounts, wrinkled his brow and with a strongly disgusted expression straightforwardly said the canes were salty an inedible in front of everyone.

Good, candid boy. Hannibal was once again given an irrefutable reason to love him with all of his heart and soul.

Decorating

Chapter Notes

Prequel to day 11 - gingerbread house.

Hannibal was cooking dinner. Obviously. However, he refused Will and Abigail's offer to help, saying he wanted the menu to be a surprise; he was testing something new.

There was something they could do, though. Something Hannibal was glad to leave to them, for it was highly time-consuming work. Decorating the entire house with lights, garlands, tinsels, and Christmas statuettes brought from various places all over Europe and America.

They were glad to help – because Hannibal allowing them to do it meant he trusted them with making choices he eventually might not like. He let them rule his kingdom for a little while.

So the two of them went to fetch boxes full of decorations from the basement, and once they looked inside and sighted Hannibal's thematic embellishment, they both grinned, having the same idea at the same time.

They took festoons of all colours that couldn't fit together whatsoever, and started hanging them round the living room. There were bronze, purple, yellow ones, and even pink and brown ones, and also lots of blinking lights of red and blue colours that made the whole décor even more chaotic and unorganised.

As they were finished, they moved to decorate the hallway and then the library in the same pattern that was no pattern at all.

Oh, Hannibal was going to kill them both. Metaphorically – yet, no one could ever be quite sure with Hannibal (the Cannibal). They simply had to hope last year's events in his Baltimore flat were sufficient punishment for their 'betrayal' and his love for them was big enough to let him omit the conspiracy and live with the awful decorations for a while.

Holiday Party

Chapter Notes

Prequel to day 18 - mistletoe.
Sorry for no updates, I was offline, and I will be again for the rest of the year.

It wouldn't be Christmas if neither of the Quantico base employees organised a party.

Everyone could safely tell who gladly took up on the job in one guess – Beverly Katz and her lab team.

She decided it was taking place in her house, as it was almost as large as Hannibal's place and he would never host such event on his own accord. He was more the type for the fancy dinner parties, on which he served gourmet specialties and vintage wine. No one could imagine seeing the psychiatrist wearing an ugly jumper, singing along to awful

Christmas songs, and drinking lots of cheap cocktails, nor did they want to try to.

However, she has assigned him the task of bringing the food. It was too famous and delicious to omit. They couldn't have called it a party without a specially designed holiday version of his hors-d'oeuvres.

Jack was the one to arrange alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks (for Abigail and one of Bev's pregnant colleagues). Brian and Jimmy helped with decorating the flat with tinsels, festoons, balloons, and hundreds of other ornaments that she did not set out while embellishing the Christmas tree.

They hung mistletoe on the living room chandelier. It played a part in their elaborate plan of how to get Will Graham and Dr Lecter to kiss and snog and finally go at it, for God's sake.

When the first guests arrived, Bev, the ten-year-old child in a body of an adult woman that she was, forced them to put on a pointy paper hat made of cardboard and wrapping paper one would definitely call childish, and some of the unfortunate persons even had to take a selfie with her and the boys, which required attempts to appear excited, which could only happen after a shot of something strong.

She led them to the sofa, and told them to have fun, even though there was nothing to do quite as yet, have they not wanted to turn on the TV in order to kill the horrendous songs coming from the CD player. Right now, it was *Last Christmas*.

Fortunately for the holiday spirit, Jack and Bella were the next ones to come, carrying a whole bag of bottles of God-knows-what. Alana Bloom arrived a minute after the couple, bringing two bottles of wine as well. As a gift for the host, she said.

“Thank you, Alana, go put them on the table,” replied Beverly, and pointed on the large, glass dining table Jack was just decorating with his drinks.

He has brought vodka, Jack Daniels, other spirits of unrecognisable brands similar to it, even the deplored sweet liqueurs for the ladies (Bella’s doing), and two 2l bottles of coke. Beverly noted she had beer, too. To be honest, it looked like they were all going to end up with a strong headache and a ban on drinking from the boss till the end of the year.

But. Where. On. Earth. Was. Hannibal. With the food? she thought. It was high time to commence the celebrations, and she was in fact starving!

Bev went to the living room to at least pour herself a glass, when the doorbell rang. She turned round, ready to go open the door, when Alana called, “I’ve got it!” and walked there herself. Coming to a halt, Beverly bumped into Brian who held a full glass of coke mixed with whisky (at least she thought so, because who would drink coke when there was alcohol) by accident, and almost caused him to spill the drink. It was by a hair’s length.

However, the spot they stood on happened to be right under the mistletoe bundle, as she saw when she checked why he has rolled his eyes up to look at the ceiling with an intense gaze sensing he knew in them. Awkward.

Jimmy walked to the kitchen, and when he passed them, he grinned, and whispered, “Looks like you have to kiss now.”

They could all hear Will Graham apologise for the late arrival apparently caused by inconvenient traffic in the distance and Abigail exchange few words with Alana. Hannibal was there as well, his unmistakable accent outstanding among all the people. Good.

Even better, the trio have arrived together like a proper family everyone saw them as.

The song switched to *Jingle Bells*, which was probably worse than the previous one.

Brian looked flushed at the thought of kissing one of his best friends – because he actually liked her for *years* but never told her –, but Beverly took initiative, and said, “Come here, you big man.”

She closed the distance between them, and gave Brian a friendly, smacking kiss with a loud *mwah!* She laughed, and so did he, but there was something else in his eyes. They moved on.

Bev rushed to the front door downstairs. Since she still hasn’t forgotten good manners, “Good evening, Dr Lecter, Will, Abigail!” And since she couldn’t wait for the finger foods, “I hope you’ve brought lots of snacks.”

Hannibal gave her a stern look but shook her hand and answered in affirmative. “Indeed I have, Ms Katz, don’t you worry.”

With a half-smile, he uncovered one of three platters he and his little ‘family’ brought with them as a small demonstration. It was filled with small truly mouth-watering hors-d’oeuvres made of prosciutto and mature cheese and nuts and vegetables and even fruits.

She offered to take the tray from him and carry it to the living room. “You’re a god, Dr Lecter. You deserve the best bottle of wine we have and the right to pick music we play for an entire hour; and even that would be insufficient thanks.”

“Then you’re lucky we’ve also taken few CDs,” Will responded by pulling three or four of his bag and waving them in the air. It was all the good old classic, Nirvana, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd.

“Hey, that’s not fair!” said Jimmy emerging from somewhere behind them.

To whom it wasn’t fair, exactly?

“If you could cook as Hannibal, you could have control over the music too,” Bev riposted as she walked away, towards the table. She noticed some of the spirits bottles were already started on.

The doorbell rang for the last time as the last latecomers arrived. By the time, the speakers already blasted the first song of the *Nevermind* album, and they have opened and drunk more beverages.

“Put your Secret Santa presents under the tree to the others,” Bev told the group of agents upon sighting they have entered the room. Now, when everyone was present, the party could finally begin in the true sense of word – they could start eating and drinking properly and dancing and unwrapping their presents and realising their mistletoe plan.

That involved isolating Will and Hannibal from the crowd and getting them both under the plant sans their notice. Uh. Easy.

“Hey, Will, Dr Lecter,” she called so loud everyone would become aware she has initiated their plan, “I need to have a word with you!”

Snowman

Dense, white snow fell continuously for past three days, covering every road and every lawn and every car with a thick cold blanket, putting everything to peaceful sleep. It would be more than unusual in some parts of the US, yet in northern Austria, where the two men on the run took shelter, it would be the opposite to be surprising.

Will still has not quite gotten used to being snowed-in by a metre of the white beauty. He was not used to such winters. And he was slowly getting bored by it, doing absolute and utter nothing.

Laze in bed, watch TV, read books, clean up, prepare delicious, complicated meals from their running-out stocks, eat those meals – that was all they could possibly do. It might have been a pleasant change, for once, having all the time in the world they needed, yet it was not enough. They have both come to miss the adventures the outside world offered, were it a mere shopping trip or a hand-in-hand walk at Wiener Christkindlmarkt.

That wasn't an option. The house they inhabited pro tempore was perfectly isolated for a hideout before the hungry wolves from the Bureau, but too isolated to provide a way out of there in such adverse conditions if they did not want to clear the path by themselves.

Thus, the only reasonable—and by reasonable they meant arguably acceptable—suggestion was to go outside and hold a snowman-building competition.

Hannibal implied that building creatures of snow is even more childish than riding down a hill on a piece of wood, but Will has learnt his tricks long ago, once he discovered Hannibal simply couldn't resist his puppy eyes in no case, particularly when complemented by few minutes of kissy pleading and coaxing.

And well, saying snowmen were in fact a form of sculpture arts that could help raising one's creative spirit and warming one up before actual work was the supreme argument.

"Make the ball bigger and rounder, Will! What you're making does not resemble a head in any regard!" shouted Hannibal at his partner, gathering handfuls of snow for the arms himself. Frost bit and marked his delicate skin.

They have agreed on building one – literal – snowman together, in the end.

Will raised his head, and wrinkled his brow. "No, it's a perfect head, only missing nose and ears!" he protested. It seemed so to him, anyway. "I wasn't the one to propound we build a gutted corpse."

Will chuckled. Because what else could the doctor-slash-cannibalistic serial killer who has not murdered anyone in months want to make of *perfectly deformable* snow, right?

However, “It is not a corpse, but an anatomical model of human body. There’s a difference,” noted Hannibal, albeit amused.

Will snorted silently. He mumbled under his breath, “We should have just go for a fish, as I suggested.”

“What was that, dear? Do you doubt my artistic potentiality?” Hannibal straightened himself up. The look he gave Will was intense but not a warm one.

“No, no, I said nothing,” he shouted a reply, guilt and innocence mixing in his voice, arguing of which there was more. He raised his hands red of coldness in the air in a defensive gesture.

When Hannibal’s silence assured him of not being attacked by a scoop of snow or something, he bent down again, and began to shape another pile of snow into something as a neck. Next time, he will simply leave Hannibal to his ‘anatomical models of bodies’ and build the fish.

Content with the result of his effort, Will lifted the neck and the – still expressionless – head, joined it, and walked to Hannibal, carefully bearing the craft in his frozen hands.

“Satisfied?”

“The head is too big for the body, Will. I am seriously beginning to question my choices.”

“What did you just say?” Will riposted drily and suspiciously. He narrowed his eyes while gazing into Hannibal’s. He wasn’t hard of hearing as of yet.

Hannibal’s expression turned still. It was his time to explain himself now. Because if not, he will receive more than just a snowball in the face.

“I meant merely the snowman, my dear Will,” he assured him, yet it was not convincing quite as well. Did he? Will could never be entirely certain about anything the man let out of his mouth, especially when it came to ambiguous wordplays.

Though, he forgot when Hannibal put on an honest smile and gave his hand a squeeze.

“Give me the head, I’ll fix it.”

Will did not emit an offended snort, cross his arms in disbelief of what he was hearing, and roll his eyes.

Hot Chocolate

Abigail peered into the kitchen. She was about to ask if the hot chocolate was ready – but clearly, it wasn't. She walked right into the middle of an argument.

"…you must prepare hot chocolate from original Belgian 60% cocoa *chocolat noir*, Ceylonese cinnamon, nutmeg, brown cane sugar, organic cream, and a sprinkling of evaporated milk with an additional touch of Arabica and Cuban rum, Will, otherwise it cannot be called true Christmas hot chocolate."

Will crossed his arms. Pouting, he looked at three teacups filled to the brim with the deliciously-smelling brown liquid laid on the counter in front of him. "You and your refined tongue, Hannibal! My father's always made it from 'ordinary' walnut-flavoured chocolate, whole milk, and whipped cream, and it still was the best holiday drink after eggnog I have tasted. But that just isn't good enough for you, is it?"

Not even Hannibal the chef and his posh dishes could convince him otherwise, Abigail assessed. She knew it was a recipe running in the Graham family for decades.

Hannibal continued to stir the thick substance he called chocolate, pretending what Will had said was not a stab in his pride.

How could he compare that to this? Hannibal had honestly thought Will had known better than to dispute over recipes and cooking procedures with him.

He might have loved him with all of his heart, but even thinking such ridiculous idea was a little overboard, let alone uttering it aloud. Of course it would have been good enough – everything from Will would –, hadn't Will said it in such offended and unnecessarily annoyed tone.

"Is it, Hannibal?"

"Do not attempt to stir my nerves, William—"

Saying his full name, it must have been serious. She couldn't tear her eyes away; she wanted to know how the little dispute will end. So she stood behind the door and watched in silence.

"Or? We've long gotten past the mutual desire to kill each other or put a knife in each other if we were in particularly bad temper, Hannibal. What worse could you possibly do to me for a mere disapproval of one statement?"

Will walked round the kitchen island to the cook's side. He stood tight close to him, bodies almost touching. The look in his eyes was stern and daring.

Hannibal abruptly turned 180 degrees. Fast. Contact was inevitable. He held the wooden spoon dipped in steamy hot chocolate an inch away from his face.

“You really don’t know, Will?” he purred. “There are so many things I could do.”

Locking gazes with him, he took the spoon to his mouth, and slowly licked the chocolate. “If you say one more thing about my chocolate recipe, I won’t give you a *single lick.*”

“Will you, now,” Will leant closer. He gripped the hand holding the spoon, disabling Hannibal to move whatsoever. His lips brushed against his as he spoke. “Because right now, I can only think of the exact opposite, since I can’t see a way of stopping me, even if I say my hot chocolate is ten times better.”

This was the moment Abigail should probably leave, since her fathers went from piqued to all flirty and she just knew what was going to happen. However, she did not.

Will closed the almost nonexistent gap between their lips with an ardent, open-mouthed kiss. Hannibal, even if he were mad at Will, could never, ever, resist him and not return the kiss. The love was too strong, and he was too weak for that.

The kiss tasted like the chocolate, and oh God, it was delicious. It was divine, as every single time their lips met and they gave in to passion and love, but better. Like the first time; better than the first time.

Will must have admitted the Belgian *chocolat noir* with Ceylonese cinnamon and God-knows-what other special ingredients perhaps tasted more deliciously than his recipe, but he still wasn’t letting Hannibal win. He stood by his opinion even so, if he felt a tiny bit sorry for what his real plan was.

And here it came. Hannibal broke the kiss with the words “it’s burning” and gasping breaths. Thanks to his exquisite smell, he noticed before Will.

Nothing could last forever. Not even the best things and experiences in the universe. Teacups shattered. Hot chocolate burnt.

Will was counting on it.

Abigail rolled her eyes, and entered the kitchen, going straight for a cup of Will’s chocolate. She really tried not to snicker.

Ice Skating

Chapter Notes

Sequel to day 22 - holiday films.

Bearing too many shopping bags in his hands, Will kicked the door closed. He dusted off some snowflakes stuck to his coat and hair as he laid the bags aside on the floor, and took it off. Nothing but his breath and the shuffling of clothes filled the otherwise silent house, not even the crackling of a fireplace or chopping of a knife on a board he'd half expect to hear.

Unusual.

He picked up the plastic bags full of groceries, and walked to the kitchen without a word. He knew Hannibal was there somewhere – where would he go?

Item by item, he put everything in the fridge or freezer or cupboards, and only then he went to look for his companion. Who knew where he was hiding this time. (They had no murder basement, so everywhere was possible.)

Where he did find him, though, was unexpected. The man sat on a stool in a room they had no name for – only old, impeding, unnecessary objects with no better place to put reigned that kingdom –, and edged a pair of skates Will had no idea he owned. And not just one, but two.

Will froze in the doorway. He watched Hannibal's transfixed gaze and his rigorous hands move along the blades.

"Hello, Will," Hannibal said. He did not look up from his work. "You did not believe me when I said I used to figure-skate. So, I am going to show you. We are going skating." It was not a question.

There was a large, admission-free rink at the city hall. That was good. There were many people on it, cumbersome children in particular. Less good. But Will wanted a proof, now did he? So, here he was, and what was available was better than nothing.

He hasn't stood on the ice for oh God so long. Last time, it was—it was with Walter and Molly. He took them on a trip to Washington, once, and among other holiday activities, they borrowed skates and tried to remember how does one move on ice without falling hard on their arse.

Having finished tying the laces, Will stood up, and slowly hobbled to Hannibal who already waited for him in the rink. He wore an annoyingly amused grin on his face. Maybe he could have just shown him without making him to go skating as well. It would do better good. And not drinking that one cup of punch would do better good, too.

Hannibal extended a helping hand for Will. He was wearing gloves, thus he could not show the world the ring on his finger like the protagonists of *Yuri!!! On Ice*.

“No, I’m good, thanks,” he responded. “I know how to get on the ice.”

Just like Viktor taught Yuuri – always look confident like you know what you’re doing. He wouldn’t let the children laugh at him, no. He was no champion, but he could skate just fine, thank you very much.

Will glided to the corner to Hannibal before they both pulled off to the centre and joined all the Wieners and tourists visiting the Christmas markets. Will was a bit unsure with the first slides, and he tried to be as careful as he could, but Hannibal hadn’t the slightest problem with anything. He skated like a pro since the moment he has first touched the ice, even if years passed since his last experience.

They did not even go round the skating rink once. What a show-off.

Shortly after, a little girl abruptly changed the direction of her route and appeared in their path out of the blue. Will nearly stumbled over and faceplanted the cold, hard ice. Hannibal the former figure skater, however, circled her masterly, and promptly gripped Will by his arm to prevent the shameful fall from happening.

“Careful, Will, or you might hurt yourself,” he smiled. It was an exact opposite of what they would do, or say, a year ago. Then, it was all about crushing, heartbreaking games causing each other harm. Now, it was all about fondness and help and understanding and petty arguments and watching shows about skating, which ended up in actual and unsuccessful attempts to do so themselves.

“Shut up.”

This time, Will did not let go of Hannibal’s hand. They remained linked; people may stare as they please. They moved on, circling the rink again. Will’s style got better, gradually.

Few minutes later, Will braked at the boards. Partly to get some rest and partly to let Hannibal show his best. “Now, show me what we came here for, Hannibal. I wanna see it.”

“If you think I can jump a quad, I must disappoint you, dear,” he replied, as though reading Will’s thoughts. A smile appeared on his face once more, despite himself. “I could barely jump a triple, back in the days.”

Will feigned a pout. He knew he couldn’t have expected Hannibal to pull out a short programme choreography or something – it was thirty years, and he was no Viktor Nikiforov – but he did not know what he had expected, either.

“You said you’d amaze me. Do it. Going around the rink isn’t enough.” Hannibal loved that authoritative tone in Will’s voice. And *amaze* was nowhere close to an understatement. He was going to enthral him and make his eyes affix to him. Without jumps.

Will said he resembled Viktor quite a lot; well, he was going to have it all.

Wordless, Hannibal set off. The ice round him was more or less vacant. It allowed him to gain speed and skate to the even emptier centre, where he pulled off a pirouette on one foot followed by a single loop (the only thing he still could execute in his age and weight). He still hasn’t forgotten everything from his training.

Not only Will has watched. Everyone has, some overtly, some in the corner of their eye while skating onwards. Because one does not see that every day, a man performing figure skating elements on a crowded public rink at the Christmas markets.

Gloves

Forgetting to take gloves on a long dog walk in the middle of the toughest winter was a terribly bad idea. Will regretted it not even ten minutes after they have left the warmth of the fireplace and a cup of hot coffee behind and made their way across the snowy leas of Alpine countryside.

His hands were red and completely frozen yet burning. It felt like he dressed them ice cubes instead of the knitted gloves he forgot in the pockets of his other coat, as he realised too late. It felt like the predatory air was biting his skin and slowly feeding on it. It felt like they were going to die, and the coarse cord he used as a leash did not help whatsoever.

Especially when the hound *ran* and did not come to a halt. There would be blood, soon.

Spencer was a malamute he has adopted from a shelter only a few days ago, and he was one hell of a headstrong big dog who wouldn't obey him under the promise of a sausage. Will could not let him go free. That would end up badly.

And Hannibal? Well, Hannibal enjoyed his slow walk with jolly, loitering Encephalitis somewhere far behind, and probably still shook his head in disbelief of Will's unceasing compulsion to take every dog that looked at him with its sad eyes.

Because he would never give up his family, not even now. Dogs surrounded him with unyielding friendship and love, never left, never betrayed him, always welcomed his presence. He couldn't say the same about people.

Hannibal… was complicated. The boundaries of what they have been or could have been or will be were never set. They were what they were. Compatible. They tolerated each other, and the dogs, and loved each other, too.

His hands burnt more, and he breathed heavily. Clouds of steam escaped his mouth with every exhale. He whistled.

"Stop, Spencer, stop!" *Just slow down for a while and let your father rest for a while, will you?*

Somehow, by a miracle, he stopped. And somehow, Hannibal and their small friend caught up with him, cheeks flustered from the frost and jogging in the frost. He pulled a pair of black, fuzzy gloves out of one pocket, and handed them to Will with a half-smile.

"You forgot your gloves, Will," he said as a fact. "You must be freezing."

"You have no idea," he responded, and returned the smile. "Thank you, Hannibal."

People weren't bad, sometimes. Like when one forgets their gloves in the pockets of their other coat.

New Year's Resolution

Chapter Notes

this one is BAD but the next MAKES UP FOR IT I PROMISE

“Can I have a question?” Will asked all of a sudden. He laid the a fork with a piece of one of the best veal steaks he has ever eaten on the plate, and decided to take the glass of wine instead. He locked gazes with the man.

A subtle and hesitant nod told him to proceed, though Hannibal had a highly suspicious look in his eyes.

“Do you ever make a New Year’s resolution, Hannibal?”

He did not know why exactly had he asked that question. It was silly, and pointless.

Probably because he never did make one, not since he has been a child, and since this was their first Christmas and New Year together, he has thought it would be a nice tradition and form of mutual… bonding? understanding? unconditional trust? to establish.

Hannibal finished chewing on the meat, savouring every bite and contemplating the answer. He swallowed, the bob of his throat travelling up and down his neck.

“Resolutions are preposterous and pitiable, Will.”

He really, really should have anticipated such reply.

Will sipped at the sweet red wine filling his glass. “That does not answer my question.”

“I you truly demand an answer, I have never had a reason or a window of opportunity to partake in such inane pursuit of promises one can hardly keep for a third of a year, no,” Hannibal said, then. He cut another slice of the steak, and before he put it in his mouth, he added, “Do you have something particular on mind, *mylimasis*?”

“I’ve been wondering,” he started—but then the silent voice in the back of his mind made him stop and change his mind. “…it doesn’t matter.”

He took another sip, and let the rich taste roll on his tongue.

“Will,” said Hannibal softly, “nothing is too insignificant to remain unsaid. What are you thinking of?” He rested the set of cutlery on the brim of is plate as a gesture he gave all of his attention to Will and Will only.

“To you, it’s going to sound *preposterous* and *pitiable*,” he parroted Hannibal’s words. It was hard not to sound offended.

“Will, if you’re trying to suggest we exchange New Year’s resolutions—”

“It’s a fatuous thought, Hannibal. Forget about it.” Will began carving the steak with a bit more force than necessary. He has just thought—

“No, Will, if you—if you want to do it, if you want us to do it, then your wish shall be my command. I will not say such thing again.”

I would do anything for you, he meant.

“No, Hannibal, you don’t have to—”

“But I want to, Will. In fact, yes, let’s do it.”

“As in right now?”

“It is 30th of December, Will, when else?” Hannibal smiled lightly.

“Dinner will get cold,” riposted Will, deadpan.

“Let’s make it short – and let’s do it as a toast.” Hannibal pushed back his chair with a long, groaning sound. He got up with his glass in one hand, and waited for Will to do the same.

“Alright, I will start, since it was my idea,” said Will, and cleared his throat. “And since I actually have no idea how do you do it, I am just going to say this: in the year of 2019, I will find at least a part-time job so we wouldn’t have to live of illegal money and the little we managed to save from your accounts, and I will also try to fill all the gaps in my Spanish so I could comply to my promise.”

“Will, that—”

“No words. Amen to that.”

They clinked glasses. “Amen to that.”

“Your turn, love.”

Unlike Hannibal, Will had considered his resolutions, in spite of the extemporaneousness of the idea. It was easier for him. Hannibal did not really know what to say.

Nevertheless, he had to think of *something*.

And he was very well aware of what Will wished for the most, a promise he has never thought he would be able to give to anyone, nor he would ever desire to, a promise that meant giving his own heart and soul to one’s hands.

He repeated Will's words, "In the year of 2019, I will not kill a soul unless you explicitly express your consent, and I will not do anything in contradiction to what you ache for."

Kiss at Midnight

Chapter Notes

> so, this is that last work. and since it is so, i told myself 'fuck the word count and make a proper fic', and really actually tried. which is quite apparent, lol.
> this is the first and the last time i tried and gave it my best. i promise you'll like it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Paris was truly beautiful on New Year's Eve. Snow fell from the sky as faerie dust, muffling the noises of the bustling metropolis, putting everything to abnormal state of peace, covering the cold ground with a fluffy white-out duvet.

There were no stars, but the lights of the deathless city shone into the far. The Eiffel Tower was a beacon luring people from all corners of the world, distant or proximal, to its glancing monumental frame like moths to a flame.

Will Graham and Hannibal Lecter – wanderers on a never-ending path, though never lost – were two of those moths enticed by the view of gazing at the fireworks at Sacré-Coeur with a glass of genuine Champagne in their hands when the last second of 2019 ends and turns into the first second of 2020, the beginning of a new decade full of immense possibilities.

They did not worry about recognition anymore. It was nearly a year and a half since Will has pushed them over the cliff and let their old identities die so they could be reborn into someone else, utterly different. They did not worry about the ghosts of their pasts anymore.

They lived right here, right now.

Right here meant a skating rink situated in the first tier of the fabled metal construction on Champs-Elysées. It was lit up in red and yellow dim lights creating a film-like, cosy, romantic atmosphere that just called for a hand-in-hand skate under the night sky before it all starts.

Right now meant 10:42 post meridiem. Time enough.

People moved across the rink like ants, slow, unorganised, but the men did not pay them any attention. They cared for what lay ahead of them and in their hearts solely. Their fingers were intertwined, as were their souls. Together through anything.

Will's skating abilities have considerably improved since last year in Vienna; he was not afraid and staggering anymore. They each glided smoothly and gracefully as if the ice were their own, as if the city were their own. It was all Hannibal's doing, with a little help from the skating anime they loved to watch, and he could only be proud of another thing he has ignited in his Will, his lamb, over the years.

They skated until it was eleven hours, and when they did not, they luxuriated by the view over the capital of France, standing at the rails and puffing clouds of warm air out of their mouths and nostrils.

Eleven was the time to take off their skates and retire to their hotel. They resided in a glorious five-star castle at the bank of the river Seine where they served truffles and caviar for breakfast if it were a wish of the customer just so they could wallow in all the glory from close up. They could afford it.

It was Hannibal's world, but Will let himself jump on the train this time, and he was very happy with not caring and having a great time for three fucking days in a year (two years, if we're being meticulous).

Hannibal slid his key card in the lock. Behind the door, their vast, amply bedight suite awaited them. The hotel was a tiny bit too snobbish to Will's taste, but he could definitely get used to such service – floor heating, king-sized beds, exquisite food, et cetera, et cetera.

They shrugged off their coats, and proceeded forwards.

Will *knew* he was supposed to change from the sweat-stained clothes into the festive dinner jacket hanging on his wardrobe door, but he *couldn't*. Instead, he plopped down on the sofa, and stared at the ceiling without uttering a word. Then he closed his eyes, and contemplated the events that had led to that moment.

"Will, we have little time to spare," said Hannibal drily, albeit slightly amused at his resigned gesture. "Get dressed. You don't want to miss it."

Though, it was more about what he did not want to miss. The fireworks could be seen from their apartment's window just perfectly, but what he has planned for the night would lack the magic of the moment if they stayed holed up inside.

"Time," replied Will, eyes still locked, "is a constant flow we have no power upon – but it's also believed it's relative. So time can wait a minute."

Because Will indulged in metaphors and amphibologies as much as the other man, twisting words like God twists the universe.

"Some allege all of time exists at the same time, past, present, future, all possible futures, and therefore we might be allowed to bend the fabric of time as per our own desire. But those people most likely believe in the existence of extraterrestrial life forms." Hannibal came closer; he stood right above Will and looked down at his relaxed form.

Will felt his gaze burn a hole in his chest. He burst his eyes open, hints of playfulness clinging to his eyelashes. "What do you believe in, Hannibal?" His mouth twitched in a half-smile.

"That time in an omnipresent unchangeable force no human being is able to manipulate," he answered in concordance with their game. The line between figurative and solemn was very thin. So was the space between the two of them.

“Uh-um. I would beg to differ, because I could certainly think of at least one being who is.” He reached for Hannibal’s leg, and ran his fingers along it in a slow, teasing move.

“Despite the fact how much I want to learn that mysterious being’s name,” he breathed, and gripped the hand before it travelled too high, “we truly must get ready, my love.”

They have arrived to the majestic cathedral round 11:40. There have already stepped tens, dozens of people waiting for the show to break out and the new decade to come; they were couples and families, mostly, decorated with ridiculous glasses and holding big balloons with the number 2020 imprinted on the plastic.

In their eyes, Will and Hannibal were no more than another ordinary unordinary couple to join them, and that was how it ought to be.

They walked from the hotel, leaving footprints in the crispy layer of snow. They would be trampled, though. The marks were nothing permanent, unlike the indelible marks on their bodies.

Hannibal has taken a picnic basket with a bottle of the sparkling yellow beverage, two flutes, and two little *soufflés au chocolat noir et liqueur de frambois* to savour under the burning night sky after this year yields reign to the next. Something sweet for celebration, if there is something to celebrate.

It still snowed, and the air was freezing cold, below zero. Hannibal, considerate as ever, foreshadowed certain occurrences that would come into being, and thus he has brought warm blankets they could wrap themselves in. Other impatient, freezing people might envy as they only wish.

“Thank you, Hannibal,” Will said as his partner’s firm yet gentle hands put a checked brown-and-beige blanket around his shoulders and rested on them for a while with an enigmatic smile on his face that could express a thousand feelings at the moment. Then he took one too so the warmth would surround his body and wouldn’t escape to the air around.

They stood and watched and absorbed the magical ambiance of the night with more or less no words. Speech was redundant, at the moment. The rest did not share the same opinion, but at least they remained relatively silent, their French or English or German humming in the background like working bees in a hive, inaudible murmur of rotating film in old programmes.

Until it didn’t. In one moment, their gazes remained glued to their watches and mobiles, and they suddenly came alive. Some counted down from already, some waited. Some conjured up bottles of champagne as well. That was when the clocks struck 11:59.

That was it. It was here. The Moment.

Will bundled up tighter in his blanket, shivering. He turned his head to Hannibal, who stood by his side. He was not cold; he was thrilled. A wide, boyish grin spread across his visage.

Hannibal couldn’t resist his precious, beloved mongoose. He had to return it with equal fascination.

It was their second New Year together, yet it felt as the first all over again. Adventurous. Exciting.

42, 41, 40, 39, 38.

Hannibal bent down to take the cold bottle of 2016 Champagne nestled at the bottom of the wicker basket and the crystalline glasses. He handed them to Will, and unscrewed the safety bucket holding the cork.

30, 29, 28, 27, 26.

He pocketed the fuse, only to pull out something else hidden in the palm of his hand. He slowly began to wiggle the cork loose. Right now, he was thankful for the multilingual countdown resounding from all around. He did not have to mind the time himself, or attempt to bend it in his favour as the shattering teacup.

18, 17, 16, 15, 14.

It was loose, only to pop it out. He directed the pressured bottle out of harm’s way, and locked gazes with Will.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6.

Their faces reflected the lights of the streetlamps; their eyes shone with delight, excitement, love. Love was the cardinal emotion among all, *burning*.

5. 4. 3. 2. 1. 0.

It was 2020. New year, new decade.

Hannibal uncorked the bottle, and so did the people round the couple. He, however, saw nothing beyond Will and him, their world. The heartfelt beam still beautified his face, unable to go anywhere. He truly felt as content as never before, as he only could feel in the presence of one’s beloved.

This time, this only time, Hannibal omitted inhaling the scent of the wine and savouring it before it even touched the glass. This time, he made an exception, and poured it the second the colourful fireworks lit up the sky, spurting from the construction of the Eiffel Tower in shining patterns creating incredible ornaments like flowers and stars in the heavens.

The angels must have begrudged humanity the pleasure to watch it down on earth. And they must have sung an ambrosial melody.

He quickly put the half-full bottle aside in the snow that also fulfilled the function of an ice bucket so he could accept a glass from Will.

They toasted on the bountiful and happy New Year, drank, never ceased to smile. And then they closed the remaining distance between them and kissed under the fireworks while it still was midnight. It was a tradition.

The others have probably kissed too, but the two of them still did not care. Neither did they care about the judging and haughty looks of those who did not accept their kind of people quite as yet. It was a tradition.

It was only a quick kiss. They drank again and watched the fireworks for a minute before Hannibal crouched to pull the delicious desserts out.

Or at least Will thought he had crouched to take the desserts. But really, for what other reason he could possibly hunker…?

He had not done it for that reason. There was one more, unthought-of. Unthinkable. Impossible.

Hannibal was on one knee – the cold, wet snow be damned –, holding a simple, golden band in his hands.

Will gasped with thorough shock. He felt his cheeks flush – they had fucking audience of a half of Paris! Which, honestly, was so alike Hannibal it hurt. He has always had to have something extra.

“I could not think of a better time and better place to do this,” Hannibal began. The snow was unpleasantly biting his leg with coldness, but for Will, he would suffer a bath in the Arctic Ocean just as a walk on fire.

“Ever since you waltzed into my life with your dogs and plaid shirts and cheap aftershave, I felt something inside me shift and grow in unexpected directions. My heart began to blossom, and my very soul has been elevated in unfathomable heights, even if I refused to see it at first. I found something reconcilable to divine, and I have never felt so blessed, so lightened. So I am asking you, William Aiden Graham, my mongoose, my Chronos, my sun and stars, will you continue to stand by my side as my husband?”

Will was left speechless for a second. That—that was—wow. Hannibal Lecter proposed to him in front of the Sacré-Coeur and a crowd of strangers with a fucking speech sounding more as a wedding vow that came straight from the heart on the 1st January 2020 while the fireworks still roared in afar, and he was dumbstruck.

Always so goddamn portentous, Hannibal Lecter. Always.

Before he even managed to react, some forward English kid shouted ‘Just say yes, you idiot!’, and he realised that yes, that was what he wanted and God, why did he even hesitate? If there were one thing he was absolutely sure of in his life, it was his love for that man. It was true like a soulmate’s love, however twisted and improbable it might have seemed to be.

“Yes, Hannibal, I will.”

Still kneeling, Hannibal gently took Will's left hand in his. He carefully and attentively slid the band on his ring finger, where it fitted snugly as though it has always meant to belong there. It has, probably.

The proof, validation of his love for Hannibal, not for Molly. If he has ever loved her, it could not have been affection so deep and consuming like spreading wildfire.

The crowd clapped their hands, and cheered, and whistled. It was also a tradition.

Hannibal got up at last, and pulled Will – now his *fiancé*, how has he ever come to even consider such state of being –, in for another midnight kiss, even if it were minutes after midnight now. The kiss was deeper, hungrier, more ardent and affectionate than the first. There was a lot to celebrate, after all.

Hannibal slipped one hand in the crook of Will's neck, caressing the cold, exposed skin and the loose strands of his growing hair. The other one went round his waist, tangling in the blanket that still sat on his shoulders. Will felt frisson spread across his body, alongside incredible burning heat radiating from his breast.

Will's own hands instinctively wandered to Hannibal's chest as his tongue wandered inside his mouth.

They stood there at the cathedral towering to the skies, and kissed, and kissed, and kissed. The people cheered. The fireworks painted the infinite canvas of the firmament in all bright colours possible.

They were oblivious to it all. Some things were worth missing the show for.

Long live the Murder Husbands; may Freddie Lounds never know of this.

Chapter End Notes

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2017, EVERYONE!!!

fun fact: i started writing this in late hours so i could finish it at midnight. but i failed; i finished it at 2am-something. damn, i really wanted to make it. huh.
and i assume y'all got 'my Chronos' was a reference to the lil time talk, but in case you don't: Chronos is a god of time, therefore a being that can manipulate time. there you go.
'my sun and stars' - GoT ref on purpose, cos they totally watch it.

so, this is it. i must say i had great fun writing for this challenge, really. it was something new.
if it happens again this year... i won't do it. expected sth else? well, it maybe was fun, but it also pushed me to my limits and almost killed me. be glad i made it at all. if i should repeat it, well, that would crash my heart and soul.

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